

PLAYA DEL REY COMMITTEE
TO IMPROVE THE DEL REY LAGOON

Wednesday, September 11, 1968

Marvin Braude
Councilman, 11th District
City Hall
Los Angeles 90012

Dear Councilman Braude:

Aside from a totally inadequate "dredging" project currently in progress at the Del Rey Lagoon, continued delays in development of this prime recreation area as a Regional Park cause us to write you again with an urgent request for a complete accounting of more than \$620,000 that has for years been promised and specifically ear-marked for major Lagoon Park improvements.

Unless action is taken very soon, it now appears imminent that the Recreation and Parks Department would permit a large portion of these funds to be diverted and used elsewhere -- the latest consideration is for a \$300,000 parking lot on the Venice Beach side of the Marina del Rey boat channel.

Five and one-half years ago the Park Commission agreed to a Seven-Point improvement program for the Lagoon.

Points included buying peripheral land adjacent to the Lagoon and a complete dredging of the deep muck under the shallow water area to restore beauty and small boating recreation.

Three and one-half years ago, after the Lagoon was designated a Regional Park, \$320,000 of State Parks Bond Issue funds was approved for land acquisition to complete city ownership AND \$60,000 of City funds were voted for one single purpose -- to DREDGE the Del Rey Lagoon.

Two years ago another \$100,000 federal funds was made available for Lagoon land acquisition. The parcel in question is a small northern portion of the water area owned by industrialist Howard Hughes.

In addition, the Park Department sold tax-deeded lots within a block of the Lagoon valued in excess of \$200,000 in the past two years. Residents here were always told that the lots -- or proceeds therefrom would be used for Lagoon Park improvements. And you, Mr. Braude, as our councilman assured us of this by letter two years ago.

The Hughes property apparently has not yet been acquired and the "dredging" -- six inches of the three-foot deep muck -- is far from adequate to permit small boating or to restrain the regrowth of algae throughout the bottom of the Lagoon.

Once again, the Committee to Improve the Del Rey Lagoon sees strong evidence that the Recreation and Parks Department is treating the Lagoon as a "step-child," by delaying or ignoring its promises to substantially improve the Lagoon -- and even by attempting to divert hundreds of thousands of dollars specifically ear-marked for the Lagoon to other projects.

We urgently seek your help as a "watchdog" to prevent the park department in these efforts and to encourage them to proceed with promised land acquisition and proper dredging and other improvements at the Lagoon.

The County Assessor's office increased appraisals for taxes here nearly 25 per cent this year and considerable private improvements have been made in recent years. Lagoon improvements are long over-due.

As our councilman -- and one deeply interested in beach and park development -- we ask you protect the interests of the Del Rey Lagoon by:

1. Seeking assurance that these estimated \$620,000 funds are still available and will NOT be diverted to park projects elsewhere.

2. Encouraging the Recreation and Parks Commission and park directors to proceed with adequate dredging and to continue necessary land acquisitions and other improvements.

Please help us to remove the threat of losing these funds which have taken more than five years to acquire.

Most Sincerely,

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